Remarks

The Restriction Requirement has divided the claims into 4 groups of allegedly distinct inventions:

I. Claims 1-16, 33-35, and 37-38 (reciting a diagnostic assay and method of qualifying the risk of preterm delivery by analyzing amniotic fluid samples for particular proteins);

II. Claims 39-47 (reciting a method of qualifying the risk of preterm delivery through analysis of a spectrum from an amniotic fluid sample);

III. Claims 48-81 (reciting a method of identifying a subject at risk of preterm complications by detecting various biomarkers); and

IV. Claims 17-32, 36, and 82 (kits for detecting biomarkers).

Applicants have elected the claims of Group I for prosecution in this application. Applicants reserve the right to traverse any restriction between the remaining claims of Groups II-IV that might be requested in any divisional application, as well as any election of species that might be requested in such an application.

Respectfully submitted,

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